United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1089
28 February 1992

F R I D A Y  H I G H L I G H T S

- In a Presidential statement, the Security Council deplores and condemns the failure of Iraq to provide the special mission dispatched to Iraq by the Secretary-General "with full, final and complete disclosure" of all aspects of its programmes to develop weapons of mass destruction; demands that Iraq "immediately implement all its obligations under Council resolution 687 (1991) and subsequent resolutions on Iraq", and emphasizes that Iraq "must be aware of the serious consequences of continued material breaches of resolution 687.

- Security Council authorizes establishment of United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia to be deployed as soon as possible for a 15-month period at estimated cost of $1.9 billion.

- Delegates from 148 countries complete two weeks of negotiations on international convention on climate change, reporting progress but no breakthrough.

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In a Presidential statement read out Friday night by Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering of the United States at a meeting of the Security Council, its members deplore and condemn the failure of Iraq to provide the special commission dispatched to that country by the Secretary-General "with full, final and complete disclosure of all aspects of its programmes to develop weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometers".

The members of the Council further demand that Iraq "immediately implement all its obligations under Council resolution 687 (1991) and subsequent resolutions on Iraq" and require that the Government of Iraq communicate directly to the Council "without further delay" an authoritive and unconditional acknowledgement of its agreement to accept and implement those obligations.

The Council also emphasizes that Iraq "must be aware of the serious consequences of continued material breaches of resolution 687". Noting that an

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Iraqi delegation was prepared to travel to New York "as soon as it is invited to do so", the Council finally asks its President to extend such an invitation for the delegation to be able to come to Headquarters "without further delay".

The Presidential statement follows a round of consultations held earlier today by the Council after the publication of a report by Rolf Ekeus, Executive Chairman of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament, on his recent mission to Iraq to seek guarantees from the Iraqi Government for complete disclosure of its weapons of mass destruction. Mr. Ekeus had concluded in his report that it was not possible to obtain such guarantees and that Iraq was not providing full and complete disclosure of its weapons programmes.

In a letter to Mr. Ekeus today, the Iraqi minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, had requested that no final decision be taken to implement the plan to destroy certain ballistic missile equipment which, he alleged, can be modified and changed in such a way that it becomes incapable of being used in the production of any weapon or prohibited material. He had suggested that the matter be discussed in the framework of "all the fundamental matters to be submitted to the Security Council and the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission" by a high-level Iraqi delegation that would come to New York in March.

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The Security Council this morning voted unanimously to authorize the establishment of the United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) and asked the Secretary-General to begin the deployment of the Force "as rapidly as possible in the most efficient and cost-effective way".

By its resolution, the Council approved the Secretary-General's plan for the deployment of UNTAC and his preliminary estimates at some $2 billion for the cost of the Force for approximately 15 months. That amount includes an initial $200 million appropriated by the General Assembly on 14 February. The Council said it was vital that elections be held in Cambodia by May 1993 at the latest and called on all the parties concerned to comply scrupulously with the Paris Agreements signed last October.

The Council further urged the Cambodian parties to agree to the complete demobilization of their military forces prior to the end of the registration for the elections, as well as to the destruction of weapons and ammunition.

In an addendum to his report, the Secretary-General noted that the costs of the repatriation programme for the large number of refugees of the Thai/Cambodian border were excluded from his proposed estimates. He said he would launch a separate appeal for the financing of that operation

In a statement to the Council following its decision, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said today's decision was "vitally important both for Cambodia and for the United Nations", adding that he intended to visit the country in April. The UNTAC was a delicate and difficult mission, he said, in

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its aim to put an end to two decades of war, destruction and suffering, to create the conditions for a lasting peace and to lead the Cambodian people to free and democratic elections. He urged that the timetable for the deployment be kept and that the full mandate entrusted to UNTAC be implemented.

Also addressing the Council, the Permanent Representative to the United Nations of the United States, Thomas R. Pickering, said the Paris Agreements of last October had reserved a central role for the United Nations and had formed the basis of the Council's action today. He expressed the hope that the deployment of the operation could proceed rapidly in order to preserve the settlement.

The UNTAC will be headed by his Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, and will comprise more that 22,000 United Nations personnel, including human rights, civil administrative and military components as well as a police component of some 3,600 civilian police monitors operating throughout the territory.

The electoral component will consist of 72 international personnel operating from headquarters in Phnom Penh and another 126 personnel at a number of centres throughout the country.

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Delegates from 148 countries today completed two weeks of negotiations on an international treaty on climate change, reporting progress but still in disagreement on several fundamental issues.

Jean Ripert (France), the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change, said that with only three months remaining before the intended signing of a climate convention at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in June, he still believed agreement was possible.

The process was complex, he pointed out at a press briefing at Headquarters after the suspension of the session. "We are not negotiating either a declaration or a resolution, we are negotiating a convention, a document that will bind Governments for many years, and that is a heavy responsibility."

Mr. Ripert said he hoped that political will would be mobilized at the end of the next round of negotiations, scheduled to take place from 30 April to 8 May, so the Committee could come up with a satisfactory convention that would make it possible to start a pragmatic, determined process of cooperation in the area of climate change.

Meanwhile, the world's three largest environmental non-governmental organizations (NGO's), at a press conference at Headquarters earlier this morning, warned that without a new impetus there might be no agreement reached. Greenpeace International, Friends of the Earth and World Wildlife Fund called for an emergency high-level meeting, within the next four to eight

weeks, in order to break the impasse which they said had stalled the climate change negotiations.

They attributed the stalling of the negotiations to the United States which, they said, had not indicated its willingness to agree to any specific commitments to limit gas emissions. Until there was that kind of commitment by the United States, the negotiating process would not be able to come up with an effective signature text for the Earth Summit in June.

The three organizations said the emergency summit would call for "a deal" between the industrialized countries on the stabilization and reduction of CO2 emissisons and other greenhouse gases; a package on the financial and technological transfers, and clear commitments on the promotion of renewable energies and energy efficient technologies. Without such a deal, he said, there would be "either no convention in Rio, thereby giving a disastrous signal to the whole world, or we will have a hollow, empty convention which is also unimaginable".

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